

## Microsoft Visual Basic 6.0 Position Paper

<b>Office of Enterprise Technology Strategies</b>	<b>Position Paper</b>	Effective Date: October 1, 2004
<b>Position Area:</b> Application Domain	<b>Title:</b> Microsoft Visual Basic 6.0 Position Paper	

**Position Statement**

The Office of Enterprise Technology Strategies (ETS) will not recommend for approval any new project certification requests that employ Microsoft's Visual Basic 6.0 (or preceding versions) as part of a technical solution beginning October 1, 2004. This applies to both in house developed and COTS solutions.

**Position Drivers**

I. Visual Basic 6.0 fails to adhere to North Carolina Statewide Technical Architecture. In particular, Visual Basic 6.0 fails to adhere to the following Statewide Technical Architecture Principles and Practices:

## Principles

1. Principle 2.00.02 Design applications to be highly granular and loosely coupled.
2. Principle 2.00.03 Plan for extensibility and scalability.
3. Principle 2.00.04 Design application to reuse components.

## Practices

1. Practice 2.01.01 Design for the N-tier service oriented architecture.
2. Practice 2.01.02 Do not focus on platforms or deployment.

II. Microsoft's current strategy is to cease mainstream support of Visual Basic 6.0 on March 31, 2005. Therefore, continuing use of Visual Basic 6.0 places the application and potentially the agency at risk, and will result in higher maintenance costs.

Mainstream support includes but is not limited to free telephone support, free online incident support, free critical updates (also known as "Hotfix" or "QFE"), and free online self-help tools. For additional information please reference the provided link.  
<http://msdn.microsoft.com/vbasic/support/vb6.aspx>

III. Microsoft released Microsoft.Net in 2001 as an enterprise level framework developed to overcome the limitations of Visual Basic 6.0 by providing an extensible, scalable enterprise level framework. Microsoft.Net allows development of standards based, n-tier applications consistent with the North Carolina Statewide Technical Architecture (NCSTA). Please reference the Microsoft.Net Implementation Guidelines document for additional Information ([www.ncsta.gov](http://www.ncsta.gov)).

### **Position Explanation**

In support of the NCSTA, ETS is providing this explanation of the principles, practices, and standards as it relates to new and existing technologies.

ETS will not recommend approval of any new project certification requests that employ Microsoft's Visual Basic 6.0 (or preceding versions) as part of a technical solution beginning October 1, 2004. This applies to both in-housed developed and COTS solutions.

Microsoft Visual Basic 6.0 was developed to be easily learned, written, and executed exclusively on Microsoft operating systems. Visual Basic's simplicity, which allowed for easy small-scale development and deployment, has also led to its limitations.

Visual Basic is not an object-oriented language; it was developed to process code sequentially, which requires unnecessary duplication of code. The duplication of code causes a program to require more space in memory and process data at a slower rate than other programming languages. Additionally, Visual Basic 6.0 does not have the ability to multithread, support objects pooling, or share types, which restricts its ability to be extensible or scalable to an enterprise level in compliance with the NCSTA. Moreover, Visual Basic 6.0 was not designed with integrated security, which has gained enterprise importance within the past several years. For these and other supplemental reasons, ETS does not consider Visual Basic 6.0 as a viable business solution for use in North Carolina State agencies.

Agencies deciding to resolve the inherent limitations within VisualBasic 6.0, and to mitigate the mainstream support deadline of March 31, 2005, may choose to migrate existing applications and develop new applications employing Microsoft.Net framework, or other enterprise class development framework. ETS encourages agencies to develop applications utilizing an n-tier Service Oriented Architecture (SOA) so as to improve extensibility and scalability of agency-developed applications.

### **Position Exceptions**

Agencies seeking exception to this position may seek a waiver. Waivers will be reviewed by ETS on a case-by-case basis. Those agencies seeking a waiver need to following the process detailed in the IRMC approved Roles and Responsibilities process document found at [http://ets.state.nc.us/ncsta/ets\\_architecture.html](http://ets.state.nc.us/ncsta/ets_architecture.html)